

WHERE STATE'S RIGHTS LEAD TO

AN EDITORIAL

The lynching at Salisbury, Md., last week puts Governor Ritchie's state's rights theories to a severe test.

Governor Ritchie told an Associated Negro Press reporter in Chicago last week that he does not favor a Federal anti-lynching bill, because "the states should take care of such things."

On the other hand, the Governor advised local newspapermen that he sees "no need of appointing a commission to investigate the lynching. None but county authorities have authority in the case," and he is extending his authority to the limit, in directing Mr. Preston Lane (state's attorney) to take an active part in the investigation.

To carry it one step further, the Governor doubts that mob members will be punished because it is difficult to get a grand jury to indict itself, its friends and its relatives in such cases.

Following this state's rights theory of the Governor then, the lynchers of Salisbury are out of danger.

They can lynch one person or a dozen without fear. In fact, they may lynch all the colored people on the Eastern Shore and the county courts remain defiant; the sovereign State of Maryland is powerless, the Federal government impotent.

If this is the way that the state's rights theory works out, we say it's no good. Its motto ought to be, "Give the lynchers a break."

And if under state's rights, the humblest citizen is not safe in his life and property, we repeat, away with state's rights.

Should it be pointed out that the Federal government has made a mess of prohibition enforcement, we'll admit it, but add that the amendments providing citizenship and suffrage for colored people and women are outstanding examples of "Federal meddling" that have proved sane and wise.

Of course, we know that the state's right theory was not designed to work out in this manner. But the fact remains, that is the way things have turned out.

After all is said, however, we in Maryland know that it is not a theory of government, but the white people of the Eastern Shore who have failed.

A democracy of morons and Kluxers is bound to fail. Like pigs, they wallow in their own filth, until seized by the snout and yanked out.

We may be mistaken, but it is our opinion that with such degenerates at large, only the iron hand of the federal government can save the Eastern Shore from utter social and political damnation.